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and depression can afford not to read it. In the descriptive and statistical sections, where the author largely forgets his non-monetary assumptions, the book is much less unreal and metaphysical.

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*The Next Step in Democracy*, By R. W. SELLARS. New York: Macmillan, 1916. 8vo, pp. 275. \$1.50.

The general purpose of this excellent book is to give "a clear idea of those advances in social, economic, and political life which appeal to the kindly and intelligent man of the western world as both desirable and feasible." "Cannot justice be increased among us if we take thought and be no longer satisfied with the traditionary methods of dealing with our fellow-men? Cannot freedom become less formal and legal and more a reality for the mass of workers if the spirit of co-operation be allowed to permeate and mould our economic institutions? Cannot equality pass from a mere phrase to a significant reality if it be taken to mean equality of opportunity? Such questions as these," Professor Sellars says, "are abroad in the land and the sentiments which they are fostering will gradually find expression in those practical reforms and social experiments which mark the onward movement of democracy."

This onward movement our author divides into three stages: the stage of *status*, often spoken of as primitive socialism; the stage of *individualism*, or let-aloneism, called on its political side "the police-power view of the state" and on its economic side, *laissez-faire*; and finally the stage of *socialism*, which Professor Sellars in these few words satisfactorily defines: "Socialism is a democratic movement whose purpose is the securing of an economic reorganization of society which will give the maximum possible of justice, liberty, and efficiency and whose plan is the gradual socializing of industry to the degree and extent that seem experimentally feasible." In this succinct definition four essentials are included. In the first place, socialism is a *movement*, not a fixed system, but a "slow and creative growth," an "aspiration," as Proudhon expressed it, "towards the amelioration of society." In the second place, this socialistic movement is *democratic* in character. To be sure, "our own plutocracy was founded ostensibly upon a democratic theory, but one," says Professor Sellars, "which has proven itself to be false, because too atomic and with too much stress upon fixed rights. The result has been the shamefaced growth of a vulgar type of aristocracy.

It is the inadequacy of the basis adopted by our so-called democracy that socialism attacks. It demands that the good of all become the avowed end of society and that conscious and persistent efforts be made to attain this good in spite of the inertia of institutions." In the third place, socialism "concerns itself with the *economic* reorganization of society," the purpose of such reorganization being "to give the maximum possible of justice, liberty, and efficiency." Finally, as to the means to be employed, "socialism desires the introduction of *group ownership and control* wherever feasible in order that the motive of private profit may be subordinated to human welfare. Co-operation of such sort," says Professor Sellars, "stresses social relations, trains the imagination to think of the self as in large measure a function of society as a whole, removes the unholy emphasis on wealth as the end of life, and makes life less of a grim battle against pain and more a valiant and successful campaign against the niggardliness of nature."

"This socializing of industry should not," our author adds, "diminish the need for individual responsibility but rather hearten it because lessening the unholy pressure to which the individual is now subjected." From which it would appear that "the personal ideals of socialist and reforming individualist are less sharply opposed than is usually assumed. Both aim at the proper harmony of personality and efficiency." "The individualist stresses personal success and the life of the family—the narrower and more primitive social groups—while the socialist brings into the picture those connective relations of interdependence which make society something corresponding to an organism. So the socialist feels he has something more positive to offer than the reforming individualist; in his eyes industry has passed beyond the stage of individual management for the sake of private profit and henceforth involves "a kind of social partnership which properly implies rights, responsibilities, and consequences which are beyond the just sovereignty of any individual or arbitrary group of individuals."

But we Americans—"abstract idealists who refuse to test our beliefs by facts"—are still on the individualistic stage. This is because we "have remained on the whole what the Germans call *kritiklos*, that is, unreflective, uncritical." As Professor Sellars so sagely remarks: "we have taken high-school buildings for schools, and city halls for civic consciousness of the city, and libraries for scholars—we need to have a Socrates to sting us out of our lethargy." "Formerly we were fascinated by the vision of an abstract liberty which assumed that it was possible for individuals to be isolated and self-sufficient; now we are

asking ourselves the conditions of a dynamic social liberty in which individuals may aid one another to find the conditions of a satisfactory life." And we are coming to realize at last that the enemy of our liberty is no longer government, but lack of opportunity and of actual control of the conditions of life. But "before America will turn to socialism it must be converted—a slow process this when it concerns a nation—and learn to look beyond mere quantitative achievement to the sane qualities of life. It must thirst for real liberty, rational equality, justice, and a noble life and be so convinced of their transcendent worth that it will not hesitate to look upon rights and institutions as valuable and deserving of consideration only so far as they are clearly conducive to these ends."

With all he has to say of the present, Professor Sellars is still optimistic with regard to the future. "A new vision of justice," he says, "has taken possession of those unselfish minds who form the ethical leaven of society." Thus the ideal of the present-day socialist is become that of "stimulating the social conscience to a desire of better things." Some of these better things our author sets forth as follows: Socialism hopes to reduce the disorder characteristic of the market as at present organized; socialism hopes to lessen the waste characteristic of present methods; socialism hopes to eliminate all degrees of competition that are obviously anti-social in their consequences; socialism hopes to eliminate unmerited poverty; socialism hopes to tap new energies which are now latent and are not elicited by our social arrangement; socialism hopes to make labor-saving devices really saving of labor; socialism hopes to procure a fair degree of leisure for each individual; socialism hopes to achieve a better distribution of human costs; socialism hopes to bring in its wake a society, healthier physically and morally, and one ever more capable of developing sane and progressive institutions."

The misconceptions of socialism Professor Sellars is very careful to correct; the objections to socialism he meets candidly and with evident conviction. Having thus cleared the ground, Professor Sellars then proceeds to consider the ethics of labor, the growth of justice, some principles of pecuniary reward, and the conditions of a social freedom. It is in the chapters devoted to such consideration that Professor Sellars is at his best. Everything he says is extremely practical and to the point, yet illuminated with a lofty idealism. A few quotations taken at random will illustrate: "Modern private property is the most irresponsible institution ever developed." "Let us not fool ourselves: the

society of today in the United States is not a democracy, it is plutocratic commercialism dominated by pecuniary values. Democracy is as yet largely a matter of vague sentiment and of perplexed wishing." The result is that "there has been a revulsion from work and a dilettante trifling with life. Life has come to be thought of as something which lies beyond labor, whereas the right kind of labor is the heart of life." "So few of the leisure class have vital lives. They have no large interests and plans, the carrying out of which by persistent effort would give them a happy and noble life, and they are forced to fall to the level of seekers of distraction. The stimulus of serious purpose and of large, wholesome problems is absent." "Age and position are naturally conservative and suspicious of new departures; success and comfort have their prejudices as surely as do failure, poverty, and unarrived ability." On the one hand, "poverty hinders the growth of nobler achievements because it prevents the possession of necessary conditions"; on the other hand, "wealth is apt to remove the simplicity and directness of genius." Surely "that society which toils overhard to give fools wherewith to disport themselves is a foolish society." Indeed, "the paradox of America has been that its pride has suffered so little at its acknowledged inability to do large social things in a co-operative way." "The ethics of reward is bound up with the ethics of work and the ethics of lesiure"; surely then we should seek some principle of reward "above the level of power, custom, and prejudice." Evidently the principle of distribution should be "internal, purposive, and social and not merely external and mechanical." For is it not true, as Professor Sellars says, that "the ultimate salvation of a people will be spiritual, intellectual, volitional"? "It is the soul of a people which creates its institutions, choosing those which best express and forward its aspirations. And if we, as a people, desire this spiritual unity which has in it the creative power to make democracy more than a cumbrous political form, we cannot remain divided into masters and men, controllers and controlled, the 'haves' and 'have-nots,' the dependent and the independent. Our future will be determined by our solution of the economic question; but this solution will express our spiritual quality and our intelligence."

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